

in the not very remote future the two halves of the world, the Eastern and the Western Hemispheres, will on this account be arrayed against each other in deadly battle,—a war so vast that it will depopulate the world.

Within the present year, since last we celebrated the great, world-festival of the Bethlehem peace angel, two of the most distinguished of our statesmen have solemnly predicted the near approach of that stupendous struggle. It has not been more than a half dozen years since the monstrous spectre of that war loomed vast and horrible over the Western Hemisphere. It came suddenly like the sweeping shadow of a mighty tempest. A great nation, a dozen nations, all the nations, the whole world, stood for a brief space in breathless surprise and apprehension. It will not soon be forgotten how the sudden apparition of the frowning front of war startled millions from the dream of peace and how the mothers of three nations looked with anxious eyes upon stalwart sons who might in a month be devoted to the tender mercies of battle on land and sea.

What torch was it that kindled so great a conflagration? The integrity and dignity of that precious Doctrine was affronted by a great maritime empire. A land of swamps and wild tropical woods with scarcely an inhabitant was threatened with annexation by a powerful and enlightened European government, a government that already owned half of the North American continent, our neighbor along our northern boundaries, offering no more menace to our republican institutions than the republic of the moon, as free, as prosperous, and more peace-loving than ourselves. It was this act of a kindred people that threatened to let loose the dogs of war, a breed imported from the nethermost hell.

One would think that a doctrine of such mighty influence must have emanated from a most exalted source. No doctrine of Christ enjoys such fervid and unanimous support. No navies and armies are built to protect His precepts from insult. No isolated nation or cluster of nations is willing and eager to leap to the slaughter in their defense. And yet this Doctrine is not from above, it is not of God; it is found nowhere in the inspired Book; it came by no supernatural revelation. It is the doctrine of one man, a mortal who tho distinguished among many of his fellows as an able statesman, a great president, seems destined to a more unique and enduring immortality in the doctrine with which his fame is connected, and which may yet make the name of Monroe synonymous with blood. For this Monroe Doctrine to which our government and our nation is foolishly committed, proclaiming as it does that no European nation shall obtain possession of any territory in either American continent, may at any moment plunge our government into war with some mighty foreign power, or all of them together. They have all refused to recognize it as part, parcel or principle of international law. As

soon as they are strong enough to challenge it the probability is that they will do so, and the final event of that challenge no mortal can foresee. The feverish haste with which we are building a mighty navy is inspired by the fear of such a challenge. Germany it is said is racing to outstrip us in the construction of war ships that she may in defiance of the Monroe Doctrine establish a great colony in Brazil, ten thousand miles away; and we are straining every nerve to be ready to prevent it, as if the colonization of the Brazillian wilderness by peaceful and industrious German peasants could or would be a menace to our political liberties. This is but one among a score of illustrations of the astounding folly of a contention, which when we consider its possibilities of blood, destruction and horror, reminds us with mournful emphasis that "fools rush in where angels fear to tread."

One is at a loss to know whether war is the apotheosis of folly, or of wickedness. It is either. It is both. If is all this and more. We are called upon to contemplate a cluster of civilized, educated, enlightened, christianized nations, which nevertheless do not possess sufficient wisdom to settle by conference all the questions of boundary and policy that can by any possibility be a source of irritation for a century to come. They are unable to disarm. They cannot cease the feverish, insane race to build the greatest navy, to equip the strongest army. They cannot do any of the simplest things that a community of rude peasants accomplish every day that they may live together in peace and comity. It is a pitiful spectacle. It is humiliating. It fills us with scorn and contempt for the leaders of the world, its statesmen and rulers. It is the most tremendous revelation of human depravity. It is the unveiling of that gulf, vast, bottomless, infernal, into which the race has fallen.

THOMAS GIBSON

Thomas Gibson, a new name among EVANGELIST contributors, but I feel disposed to give him a hearty welcome into our midst. His article, "How Conference Can Help Our Isolated People More," bespeaks interest and fidelity, moreover, the contribution has literary merit, and comprehensiveness of thought. It is not my purpose to criticise but encourage the writer,—not only to write repeatedly for the columns of the EVANGELIST but to consider himself one of the men responsible for the provision of preachers or teachers for isolated members. Conference, both district and national, would gladly provide preaching for isolated members, but there are two necessary requisites greatly lacking. One is money, the other men. I do not know which we need the most, but I am inclined to think that if we had more really consecrated men the money would be provided, and then again, we would not need so much money if we had more men (and women, too) that were consecrated to the cause of Christ, body, soul and substance.

For instance, if Thomas Gibson is the man

he appears to be on paper why should he not feel himself responsible and called to preach the Gospel to some of the isolated members he refers to. I use the name of Brother Gibson in this way simply because it is before me. I mean every other man and woman with *opportunity and ability*. It is very nice to think that some one else ought to go to preach to such and such people, but why not you? The usual answer is, "I am not called or ordained to preach." Perhaps not of men, but if one has ability and opportunity with piety, he is called and ordained of God to preach the Gospel and it will not take men long to learn the fact and perform the work of Gospel ordination.

We are called the "Progressives" and such we are, and it is just possible that we have progressed a little too far on the ministerial question. In our present organization it is customary to make about every man with any natural ability a preacher, and some even without that qualification. The result is, the German Baptist church is not wanting for that commodity. We seem to have drifted away from that custom or usage to our disadvantage and to a detriment to the cause of Christ. Men ought to preach Christ without pay for the sake of Christ, and the church thru her conferences, or local organizations ought to encourage them to do so. I am not referring to the preacher that has two or three charges to supply, or who is located among brethren amply able to pay, but men of average ability who live isolated from a church, or in weak organizations where the members are not able to support a pastor.

There is a great scramble among our churches to secure educated ministers, and almost entire indifference to the support of an educational institution. The real fact of the matter is, the local church that is not helping to support our educational work heartily ought not to have an educated minister even if able to liberally support one, and if I had my way they would not get them. Young men are supposed to educate themselves on borrowed capital, or on promises to pay, and then preach for rich congregations counting their possessions by the hundred thousand dollars, for two or three hundred dollars a year. There are a few exceptions to this among our churches, but among a good many it is glaringly true.

Perhaps I have digressed from the thought suggested by Brother Gibson's article, but it opened to my mind this preacher and supply question in various phases.

True, as Brother Gibson suggests, conference can do much toward providing for isolated members and weak churches. Men of average natural ability living among such can do much by using the ability they have, and young men aspiring to the ministry that have not the means to acquire a school education could get practical education by seeking situations of a secular order among weak unsupplied classes. The class and the man would thus both grow in knowledge and grace and power.

While education is needful and desirable,